

Plymouth Bus Service Improvement Plan 2023

13 September 2023



1.0 Executive summary

On 15 March 2021 the Government published the National Bus Strategy for England 'Bus Back Better'¹. The Strategy sets out an ambitious vision to dramatically improve bus services across England (outside London) to first reverse the long term decline in the number of journeys made by bus and second encourage passengers back to the bus, post the Covid-19 pandemic. It is intended that the Strategy will deliver cheaper, more frequent and more reliable bus services for passengers.

The National Bus Strategy requires the Council, as LTA, to:-

- Establish a formal partnership arrangement, led by the Council, as the Local Transport Authority (LTA), for all local bus services operated within the city boundary.

The Council approved the development of an Enhanced Partnership with the city's bus operators, and published a Notice of Intent² on the 25th June 2021. The statutory Enhanced Partnership subsequently commenced on the 1st April 2023.

- Lead the preparation of a Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) for submission to the Department for Transport (DfT). The BSIP must set out what the Partnership will deliver in order to make buses easier, cheaper and more convenient to use.

The Council's current Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) was originally approved by Cabinet on 12 October 2021 and subsequently submitted to the Department for Transport (DfT). Plymouth was one of 79 authorities to submit a BSIP at this time, but, unfortunately, was unsuccessful in securing a funding allocation for its delivery. Given the demand, only 31 authorities received either some of all of the funding requested for their BSIPs. However, the BSIP remains a bidding document for future rounds of Government funding for transport.

The DfT provided constructive feedback as to why the Plymouth BSIP was not funded in the first round of BSIP funding. This was predominantly around the use of language within the document, which in places lacked positivity and assertiveness, and the targets not being sufficiently ambitious had the funding been awarded. The DfT stressed that the BSIP would remain the bidding document for future rounds of funding and provided constructive comments around improvements that could be made to maximise Plymouth's chances of receiving future funding.

¹ [Bus back better - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/bus-back-better)

² [Microsoft Word - 210625 - Statutory Notice - Final \(plymouth.gov.uk\)](#)

A refresh of the BSIP was therefore approved by Cabinet in February 2023, with approval to publish the updated Plan being delegated to the Service Director for Strategic Planning and Infrastructure, in association with the Cabinet Member for Transport.

This report sets out the draft 2023 BSIP, for scrutiny, ahead of the BSIP being completed in October to ensure that the Plymouth BISP means we are well placed to secure future Government funding allocations for improving bus services.

2.0 Background

The need for a Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) and formal partnership to deliver it, is driven by the National Bus Strategy.

The goal of the National Bus Strategy (NBS) is *'to get bus use back to what it was before the pandemic. Then we want to increase patronage and raise buses' mode share. We can only do these things by ensuring that buses are an attractive alternative to the car for far more people.'* To achieve this goal the NBS identifies the need to make buses:-

- More frequent
- Faster and more reliable
- Cheaper
- More comprehensive
- Easier to understand
- Easier to use
- Better to ride in
- Better integrated with other modes and each other
- Greener
- Accessible and inclusive by design
- Innovative
- Seen as a safe mode of transport

These are the themes which our BSIP responds to.

Through supporting the development of a comprehensive bus network the BSIP delivers the strategy set out within the Plymouth Plan, in particular policies HEA6 (Delivering a safe, accessible, sustainable and health enabling transport system) and GRO4 (Using transport investment to drive growth, and commitment to facilitate the use of sustainable transport modes). This is because, through the BSIP, we will actively support the Plymouth Plan policy commitments to:-

- [Deliver] a public transport system that everyone can use, including working with the bus companies to provide easier ticketing, clear journey planning and timetable information, and accessible boarding and alighting across the city. HEA6(5)
- [Work] with public transport providers to ensure that each neighbourhood is well connected to the city's High Quality Public Transport Network offering good accessibility to key destinations. HEA6(6)
- [Work] with our partners, including the charitable sector, to provide community transport to enable people who cannot use conventional public transport to access health, leisure, shopping and social opportunities within the city and surrounding area. HEA6(9)
- [Work] with regional partners, agencies and public transport operators to deliver an integrated transport system across all modes covering key locations within and adjoining the Plymouth Travel to Work Area. HEA6 (10)

- [Continue] to support the High Quality Public Transport Network and improve public and sustainable transport services through, where appropriate, subsidies and new infrastructure. GRO4 (1)
- [Maintain, improve and expand] the network of Park & Ride facilities and services, addressing the needs of both Derriford and the City Centre including a new facility at Deep Lane, exploring suitable locations for new facilities and considering the reallocation of space at existing sites. GRO4 (2)
- [Continue] to support and develop new and existing local passenger ferry services, by working with stakeholders. GRO4 (3)
- [Continue] to support and where feasible expand Community Transport schemes. GRO4 (7)
- Use smarter choices and travel planning to provide and promote travel choice, through the planning process GRO4 (13) and
- [Develop and deliver] targeted infrastructure interventions, consistent with the long term vision and objectives for transport set out in the Joint Local Plan. GRO4 (15)

The BSIP also supports the following policies of the Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan:- SPT9 (5)⁵, where it states that the local Planning and Highway Authorities with key stakeholders will deliver: “realistic sustainable transport choices and increasing the integration of transport modes so that people have genuine alternative ways to travel.” SPT9 (6), which seeks to get the most out of our existing network and encourage behavioural change, SPT9(9) (delivering transport projects which provide a safe and effective transport system) and SPT (10) ‘taking local control of our transport future, embracing localism, generating independent resources to transform transport investment, and embracing changes in travel technology.’

3.0 Plymouth’s Bus Service Improvement Plan 2023

3.1 Introduction

The vision of the BSIP is to create a thriving bus network where everyone can be connected to important people and places, by services that are frequent, reliable, fast, affordable, and safe and clean, which will also help Plymouth to achieve its net zero goals by 2030.

The Plan directly responds to the objectives of the Government’s National Bus Strategy³ and makes buses more frequent, more reliable, easier to understand and use, better co-ordinated and cheaper.

Improving people’s lives is at the centre of the BSIP. We have listened to the city’s current, lapsed and non-bus users, along with other key stakeholders, to find out what they would most like to see improved in order for them to have bus services that they need, can be proud of and enjoy using. As a result nine passenger priorities underpin the Plan. These are:

1. More **frequent** services, more buses in the evenings and at weekends and more services (on major routes) where you can ‘turn up and go’ without needing to refer to a timetable
2. More **reliable** services, with **faster** journey times (using bus priority measures such as bus lanes and bus gates)
3. **Affordable** fares that are competitive with travelling by car, cheap multi-operator tickets and contactless payment options on every bus
4. More measures to help people feel **safe**, such as CCTV on buses, emergency help points in bus shelters and improved lighting. Also a commitment to make better use of real time passenger

³ Bus Back Better – National Bus Strategy for England (2021) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bus-back-better>

information, QR codes and apps to notify passengers about service disruptions and cancellations while they wait at stops

5. **Cleaner** buses and more enjoyable bus stop environments
6. **Simple** and accurate information at bus stops, online and on smart phone apps, which is easy to read and **understand**
7. New and extended **direct** routes to key areas and locations (such as major employers and leisure destinations); a limit of two timetable changes a year (so passengers can get to know routes and timings better); buses that are **connected** with other sustainable transport (such as trains, ferries and e-bikes); and dial-a-ride vehicles that better support communities on the outskirts of Plymouth
8. **Accessible** services, with more bus stop clearways, adequate space for a wheelchair and audio-visual 'next stop' information on buses and a commitment to customer service training to better support elderly and disabled passengers on all services
9. **Modern** buses that tackle climate change and are attractive, spacious, comfortable and suited to the needs of all passengers, with more buses providing child and family-friendly features such as additional space or fold-up seats to accommodate multiple pushchairs

The Bus Service Improvement Plan covers the city of Plymouth and spans the period 2023 - 2034, aligning with the ending of the current Plymouth Plan⁴ period. This is because the BSIP is a delivery plan of the Plymouth Plan.

3.2 Development of the 2023 BSIP

People are our biggest priority and they are the driving force behind why we want to make bus services better for Plymouth.

Our BSIP has been influenced by the local community in order to understand what currently works well, what needs to be improved, and what people would like to see for Plymouth's bus services. Complaints and feedback from our customers and through our bus operator liaison meetings has also informed the Plan.

Focus groups were conducted to inform the current BSIP and additional consultation has subsequently taken place with Plymouth Area Disability Action Network (PADAN), the Plymouth VAWG Commission and Transport Focus, who are an independent watchdog for transport users⁵.

We are currently seeking feedback from the public on the identified passenger priorities and commit to gathering regular feedback on our Plan in recognition that the BSIP must continue to meet the needs of current and potential bus passengers in order to achieve passenger growth and the associated benefits. How we will do this is set out in our Statement of Stakeholder and Community Engagement (SoSaCE) found in Appendix E of the BSIP.

Feedback on the draft BSIP is also being sought from the Plymouth Enhanced Partnership Forum. This is the body which has been established as part of the statutory Plymouth Enhanced Partnership whose

⁴ The Plymouth Plan 2014 -2034 <https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/planningandbuildingcontrol/plymouthplan>

⁵ [Home - Transport Focus](#)

function is to *'provide external insight and constructive challenge and provid[ing] opportunities for discussing issues of all kind affecting Plymouth's bus network'*

3.3 BSIP Themes and Interventions

Information from consultation undertaken to date has been used to inform what works well, and what needs to be improved, with regards to Plymouth's bus service. This information identified the nine passenger priorities which the BSIP must respond to in order to boost patronage and passenger satisfaction and has informed the interventions the BSIP looks to deliver, subject to funding and the nine priorities have categorised these priorities into themes to guide our delivery plans. These are:

1. **Frequent**
2. **Reliable and fast**
3. **Affordable**
4. **Safe**
5. **Clean**
6. **Simple and understandable**
7. **Direct and connected**
8. **Accessible**
9. **Modern**

Each BSIP measure has been linked to one of the nine themes and the interventions the BSIP looks to secure funding for are set out in tables 1 and 2. Additional interventions which are deliverable without additional funding are set out in table 3.

Table 1 outlines and explains the revenue measures and interventions that we will deliver in order to provide the best possible bus services for Plymouth. Table 2 details the capital measures that we will deliver through the BSIP.

The BSIP measures have been placed in order of order of importance across both tables 1 and 2, according to which schemes we would deliver first if the DfT were to award us the total BSIP funding that we are asking for (starting with 1 as the highest priority and 25 being the lowest priority).

The order of priority is based on what we would be able to implement quickly in order to have an immediate positive impact on current and potential bus users and by what people (both bus users and non-bus users) have told us they think would make the biggest difference to local bus services.

In the following tables the timescales for fully delivering the following BSIP measures are defined below:

- Short term: 2023/24 to 2027/28
- Medium term: 2028/29 to 2033/34
- Long term: post 2034

Table I: Revenue BSIP measures

Priority	Main theme	BSIP measure	Project summary	Who will benefit most?	Timescales		
					Short	Medium	Long
2	Accessible	Bus stop clearways	Introduction of Bus Stop Clearway Orders at 400 stops (enforcement by CCTV and the PCC Parking Enforcement Team is included in Table 34).	Passengers across the whole of Plymouth, particularly concessionary passengers	✓		
5	Frequent	Enhanced frequencies	<p>Better 'turn up and go' frequencies where timetables aren't needed on the six core corridors.</p> <p>5 minute daytime frequencies (Monday to Saturday) through combined operator services and even headways until 7pm.</p> <p>15 minute combined daytime frequencies (Sunday) on the core corridors all day.</p> <p>Co-ordinated timetables and additional resource, where necessary, to achieve a 5 minute combined frequency on core corridors (Monday to Saturday) until 7pm, with service frequencies running every 15 minutes between the start of the service until 7am and also 15 minutes between 7pm and the end of service.</p> <p>15 minute combined evening frequency on core corridors on Sundays.</p>	Residents and businesses located along the six core bus corridors	✓		

6	Simple and understandable	Co-ordinated timetable information	<p>Combine timetables across all operators' services to make information simpler and easier to understand.</p> <p>LTA to lead on the production and distribution of co-ordinated timetables for all bus stops and shelters using a standardised format and the common Connect Plymouth brand.</p>	All new and existing passengers	✓		
7	Frequent	Restored, enhanced and expanded park and ride network	Reintroduce park and ride specific buses to operate on a 10 minute service frequency from Monday to Sunday at the three park and ride sites to provide better connections to key destinations such as the city centre and Derriford Hospital.	Passengers travelling along Northern and Eastern corridors	✓		
8	Safe	The George Park and Ride Travel Centre	Funding to allow the George Park and Ride terminal building to remain open and with extended opening hours.	Residents and commuters travelling along the Northern Corridor	✓		
10	Direct and connected	Cross-city urban loop service	To boost inter-corridor frequencies and provide greater destination choice to passengers, we will run a new service operating on a 15 minute frequency two-way link providing direct access to employment, education and healthcare opportunities in communities which currently rely on an interchange to reach such destinations. The new service will run from Monday to Sunday, serving the communities of Devonport, St Budeaux, Whiteleigh, Southway, George Junction, Derriford, then via Forder Valley Link Road to Plympton, Sherford, Plymstock, Prince Rock and the City Centre.	New and existing passengers across the whole of Plymouth	✓		

14	Clean	Bus stop improvements	Re-vinyl and maintain all existing bus stop flags, poles and timetable cases, which will contribute to cleaner bus services and incorporate the Connect Plymouth branding to promote a visibly integrated sustainable transport network.	All communities across the whole of Plymouth	✓		
15	Team resource	Ongoing BSIP resource for delivery and monitoring	Ongoing funds to ensure that all BSIP interventions are delivered, able to continue in the long-term and can be effectively monitored once the BSIP term has ended.	Bus services and all passengers will benefit from ongoing BSIP delivery	✓	✓	✓
16	Direct and Connected	Market research to include researching the demand for night buses and DRT on core corridors	Market research to find out where there is demand for bus services, including whether there is demand for DRT on core corridors and / or night time bus services to support the evening economy and large local employers.	New and lapsed bus passengers	✓		

17	Affordable	<p>Skipper ticket: for multi-operator and multi-modal journeys</p>	<p>In the short-term, enhance the multi-operator Skipper ticket to make fares affordable and simpler for commuter and leisure bus users in the short-term.</p> <p>The Skipper ticket will improve fares through the provision of a competitively priced inter-operable suite of tickets (day, 7 day and 28 day period passes) for adults and children.</p> <p>The Skipper ticket will incorporate multi-modal journeys using the Connect Plymouth branding, covering bus, ferry and local rail journeys.</p> <p>Investment for the ticket will include tap on, tap off technology to allow future fare capping. This technology will be installed at Plymouth's five suburban rail stations to support the multi-modal ticketing offer.</p> <p>In the long-term, our aspiration is to further enhance the Skipper ticket offer to include onward journeys, such as e-bike hire.</p>	All passengers across the whole of Plymouth and people travelling between neighbouring authorities	✓		
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18	Simple and understandable	<p>Permanent route and destination based Personalised Travel Planning</p>	<p>Make the Plymotion behavioural change programme permanent to deliver personalised travel planning (PTP) across the city focussing on bus information, active travel and transport integration.</p> <p>Route and destination based PTP supporting people in gaining skills and confidence in finding and understanding bus routes, timetables and ticketing information.</p> <p>PTP will be provided to every household in Plymouth, distributing free co-ordinated bus network maps and timetables, which will include basic frequency and key public transport information along with a summary of the Plymouth Bus Passenger Charter, and complimentary Skipper day tickets.</p>	All Plymouth residents	✓		
23	Simple and understandable	<p>Community Transport Travel Centre</p>	<p>Open a travel centre for our Community Transport provider, Access Plymouth, which will be located within the city centre to make it easier for customers to locate the travel shop for information on services and off-bus support, in turn leading to increased patronage/ demand for community transport services.</p>	Customers requiring community transport	✓		

Table 2: Capital BSIP measures

Priority	Main theme	BSIP measure	Project summary	Who will benefit most?	Timescales		
					Short	Medium	Long
1	Reliable and Fast	Pomphlett to The Ride bus priority	<p>Junction improvements and provision of bus priority to make bus journeys faster.</p> <p>This section of the A379 Billacombe Road regularly suffers from congestion in the morning and evening peaks. In addition to the direct economic costs, this route impacts negatively on the quality and attractiveness of local bus services in respect of journey times, reliability and punctuality. Improvements between Pomphlett and The Ride are needed to provide high quality bus priority and targeted highway capacity improvements to ensure improved journey times and reliability of bus services. The proposed scheme will convert the existing uncontrolled roundabout, at the junction of A379 Billacombe Road and Pomphlett Road, to a signal controlled cross-road junction. Bus priority measures will be provided through the junction, along with improved facilities for pedestrians, cyclists and general traffic. Opportunities to integrate public realm improvements and landscaping are included within the improvement proposals.</p>	Residents and businesses along the Eastern Corridor		✓	
2	Accessible	Bus stop clearways	Enforcement of bus stop clearways by CCTV and the PCC Parking Enforcement Team.	Passengers across the whole of Plymouth, particularly concessionary passengers	✓		

<p>3</p>	<p>Reliable and Fast</p>	<p>Meavy Way bus priority</p>	<p>Reconfiguration of the Crownhill cloverleaf to accommodate bus movements, removing approximately 1 mile from existing bus journeys by giving A386 traffic an alternative route off Tavistock Road via Meavy Way through the introduction of signals. This will alleviate the inside lane queue from Crownhill to A38 Manadon, helping to reduce congestion on the A38 slip roads for journey time benefits for bus users.</p> <p>Inside lane queueing on the A386 Tavistock Road blocks back and impacts upon the northbound exit capacity of Manadon Junction, which in turn causes queues and blocking back onto the A38 Trunk Road slip roads and Strategic Road Network. Tracing the cause of this queue it is apparent that Budshead Way roundabout is the source. Westbound traffic from A386 Tavistock Road must give way to southbound right turning traffic on B3373 Budshead Way. The concept of this scheme is to remove this conflict by giving A386 traffic an alternative route off Tavistock Road via Meavy Way through the introduction of signals. This will alleviate the inside lane queue from Crownhill to A38 Manadon, helping to free up the A38 slip roads. The junction removes approximately 1 mile from existing bus routes through the introduction of a right turn that removes the need to travel through 3 arms of the existing clover leaf.</p>	<p>Residents and businesses along the Northern Corridor</p>	<p>✓</p>	
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4	Reliable and Fast	<p>Mannamead Road bus priority</p>	<p>Bus priority and traffic capacity improvements on Mannamead Road (northbound) from Torr Lane, connecting with the Manadon roundabout improvements scheme (Large Local Majors Scheme). Priority for buses at major congestion pinch-points and providing greater network permeability through the provision of new infrastructure will improve journey times and reliability. Where physical constraints prevent the creation of separate facilities general capacity improvements will be delivered.</p> <p>This scheme will improve bus facilities on Mannamead Road, developing the transport links between the City Centre, Derriford Hospital and beyond. Northbound bus facilities on the route are currently limited to designated bus laybys only.</p> <p>The scheme intends to reduce the verge and existing lane width on a section of Mannamead Road, to create a bus lane leading to the existing bus stop on the approach to Manadon roundabout.</p>	Residents and businesses along the Northern Corridor		✓	
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9	Frequent	<p>Crownhill Road bus priority</p>	<p>Bus priority through the construction of bus lanes on Crownhill Road. Resources will be released from the core corridor allowing operators to reinvest the resource on the city's secondary corridors and estates.</p> <p>Crownhill Road is a dual carriageway with a single lane in each direction. The corridor is wide, accommodating non-mandatory cycle lanes and wide hatched areas. There remains a central reserve along most of its length. This layout provides an opportunity to provide bus and cycle lanes in each direction whilst maintaining single lanes for general traffic. The proposals would create nearside bus lanes in each direction, with 2 lanes of general traffic in the offside lanes. The bus lanes would be shared with cyclists, meaning that cyclists would be fully segregated from general traffic. The scheme includes bus and cycle facilities at the Crownhill Road / Budshead Road junction that will improve bus journey times and reliability. This offers social and economic benefit to public transport users, especially to commuters with shortened journey times, and residents with reduced air pollution. The improvements to surfacing, traffic islands, signage, and road markings will increase safety for all users, and improvements to cycle, and bus provision will increase the attractiveness and efficiency of sustainable transport options across Plymouth.</p>	Residents and businesses along the Northern Corridor	✓		
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II	Reliable and Fast	<p>Eastern Corridor junction improvements</p>	<p>A series of minor junction improvements on key bus routes to reduce journey times, including at Dean Cross and Horn Cross junctions; Laira Bridge Road bus gate (westbound); and Finnigan Road junction.</p> <p>The A379 Billacombe Road leading to Laira Bridge Road serves as one of the main routes in to Plymouth from the east with 35,000 vehicles per day. It links the existing and new communities of Plymstock, Sherford and Saltram Meadow as well as communities within South Hams with the city centre. It is a busy route which experiences congestion particularly at peak times with both public transport and general traffic experiencing delays and unreliable journey times. Its strategic location makes it a critical part of the highway network. The Eastern Corridor is set to grow significantly in the future, with extensive developments (retail, business, residential and leisure) planned or already approved. This includes developments along the A379 Corridor from Plymstock, west of Laira Bridge (vacant site), Saltram Meadow (1700 dwellings already in construction) and the Sherford New Community (5000 dwellings already in construction).</p> <p>A series of minor junction improvements on key bus routes with localised cycle and walking elements have been identified within the existing community of Plymstock.</p>	Residents and businesses along the Eastern Corridor	✓		
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			<p>Feasibility designs have already been undertaken to improve capacity at the identified junctions through new signalling equipment and improved junction layouts resulting in reduced delay and congestion for buses, cyclists, pedestrians and other general traffic. The works will include renewal and upgrade of traffic signal controlled junctions in Plymstock at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Springfield Road / Reservoir Road• Pomphlett Rd/Stanborough Rd/Church Rd/Dean Cross Rd• Plymstock Rd/Dean Cross Rd/Dean Hill/Radford Park Rd <p>The work includes new pedestrian and cycling facilities and MOVA installation.</p> <p>In addition, west of Laira Bridge on approach to the city centre, a new bus gate will be provided on Laira Bridge Road (westbound) to provide considerably more priority for buses travelling towards the city centre when exiting the existing Laira Bridge bus lane.</p> <p>Capacity of Laira Bridge itself, crossing the River Plym, is constrained by the junctions at either end of it. The Council has been investigating ways of increasing the capacity on this corridor without affecting the bridge structure itself. Benefits to journeys along the main A379 Eastern corridor will be realised through the removal of the right turn movement out of Finnigan Road. The now redundant railway line passing</p>				
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			under Laira Bridge will be utilised to provide a new route for vehicles wishing to make this manoeuvre resulting in a left turn exit from Embankment Lane instead. To date, the scheme has been developed as part of the Pomphlett to The Ride bus priority scheme, also included in this BSIP.				
12	Reliable and Fast	Plymouth Embankment*	<p>Provision of a bus lane on the eastbound approach of the A374 Embankment, from Crabtree Close to the junction to reduce delays and journey times.</p> <p>*Funding is also being pursued to deliver this project through the Major Road Network programme so work will continue through whichever funding is awarded first.</p>	Residents and businesses along the Northern and Eastern Corridors	✓		

13	Reliable and Fast	Wolseley Road bus priority	<p>Inclusion of an Eastbound section of bus lane on Wolseley Road south, from the Saltash Road junction to the Camels Head junction, connecting in with the existing bus stop.</p> <p>Wolseley Road is on the A3064, one of the main route corridors into the City Centre from Devonport, St Levan and the A38. It therefore provides a critical function for public transportation, with buses regularly traversing the route. It is proposed to make this route more appealing for bus travel by reducing the wide footway to permit space to incorporate a bus lane. This 4m provision, will provide a 180m direct route that will be utilised by buses. Public parking will still be provided by the reduction of the footpath from 4m to 1.8m. The social and economic benefits of this scheme include reduced time for passenger's journeys and commuters traveling to work in the City Centre, enhanced provision and better connectivity for the city.</p>	Residents and businesses along the Western Corridor	✓		
19	Modern	Electric minibuses	Replace all of our community transport vehicles with five new electric minibuses and associated charging infrastructure.	Everyone through lowering carbon emissions and improving air quality	✓		

20	Reliable and Fast	<p>Longbridge Road bus contraflow</p>	<p>The Longbridge Road bus contraflow scheme will include a two-way road for buses (and access) only to significantly reduce bus journey times around the Strategic Road Network A38 Marsh Mills junction.</p> <p>This scheme will improve the existing bus provision in the Marsh Mills and Coypool area, offering a significant benefit to bus routes through Plymouth Road / Longbridge Road to the rest of the city.</p> <p>Bus services to Marsh Mills Retail Park currently have to u-turn around a small roundabout and take a long arduous route via Forder Valley Interchange. The primary focus of this scheme is to provide direct access to Marsh Mills Roundabout through opening up an existing one-way road to two way bus traffic via the use of traffic signals on Longbridge Road. This work would be undertaken in combination with a new bus gate across Plymouth Road to enable right turns for buses from Longbridge Road as well as a U-turn facility for buses on the approach to Marsh Mills from Plymouth Road. This would enable full coverage for all directions bus travel from Marsh Mills Retail Park and from the existing Coypool Park & Ride site.</p> <p>This scheme will provide a new section of shared footway / cycleway. This would help give increased pedestrian and cycling links from the existing Coypool Park & Ride site.</p>	Residents and businesses in the Marsh Mills area	✓	
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21	Reliable and Fast	Mutley Plain bus priority	Bus priority, public realm and pedestrian improvements to the Mutley Plain District Centre.	Residents and businesses along the Northern Corridor		✓	
22	Reliable and Fast	Haye Road bus priority	Provide capacity improvements and bus priority up to Stanborough Road Junction with frequencies to match our core corridor aspirations.	Residents and businesses along the Eastern Corridor			✓
24	Accessible	Audio-visual announcement technology	<p>Audio-visual announcement and next stop technology will be fitted to all Plymouth buses by 2026. The technology will provide audible announcements and visual displays identifying the route and direction, each upcoming stop, and the beginning of any diversions.</p> <p>It will also be integrated with information on other sustainable transport modes near the bus, such as train times and available e-bikes to hire.</p>	Concessionary passengers as well as new and existing passengers	✓		
25	Frequent	Coypool Park and Ride capacity enhancements	Expand the Coypool Park and Ride site.	Residents and businesses along the Northern Corridor			✓

Table 3: BSIP measures deliverable in the short term without additional funding

Main theme	BSIP Measure	Project summary	Who will benefit most?
Affordable	Tap and Cap	Plymouth Citybus phase two of Tap and Cap ticketing technology to allow the system to calculate return trips so that the payment channel will always provide the best value ticket for the customer	Fare paying bus passengers, citywide
	Tap on tap off technology	Deliver tap on tap off technology on all Plymouth buses to ensure fare paying passengers have the best value ticket for the journeys they make	Fare paying bus passengers, citywide
	Child fares	Raise the age of eligibility for child fares to 19	Fare paying young adults, citywide
	Fare Cap	National £2 fare cap on single journeys	Fare paying bus passengers, citywide
Safe	RTPI Cancellation messages	Cancellation messaging to be introduced on RTPI system	All bus passengers, citywide
	Bus capacity messages	Continue to provide real time passenger information on the capacity of buses operating along key routes	All bus passengers, citywide
Reliable and fast	Cashless payments to reduce boarding times	The promotion of cashless payments on buses through the provision of routes and destination based Personalised Travel Planning	All bus passengers, citywide
	Timing points	A rationalisation of bus stops which are treated as timing points, removing those which cause unnecessary delay for passengers	All bus passengers, citywide
Simple and understandable	Service changes	Service changes to be limited to twice a year	All bus passengers, citywide

	Common fare zones	Common fare zones across all bus operators to simplify ticketing choices and costs	All bus passengers, citywide
	Simplified fares structures	Fare structure review with the intention being to offer a lesser number of better value ticket options	Fare paying passengers, citywide
	RTPI QR codes	New bus shelters will have a QR code within the timetable case; passengers can scan the code and receive details of the next four buses to arrive at the stop	All smartphone enabled passengers, citywide
	Disruption Messaging Tool	In summer 2023, the bus partnership will also complete training in order to use the DfT's new Disruption Messaging Tool (DMT) in order to keep passengers up to date with any disruptions that may affect their journey. The DMT information will be distributed using a number of methods, including RTPI displays, social media accounts, and Council and operator websites	All passengers, citywide
Accessible	Customer service training	Commitment to customer service training to better support elderly and disabled passengers on all services	Elderly and disabled passengers
	Days out by bus	Production of publicity showing days out by public transport	All passengers, citywide

Many of the BSIP measures in Tables 1, 2 and 3 could have been categorised into more than one of the nine BSIP themes, which are based on our passenger priorities. Therefore, to more fully understand the full range of benefits associated with each measure, Table 4 sets out the inter-relationship of our BSIP measures and how they align with each of the NBS objectives.

Table 4: Inter-relationship of the BSIP measures and National Bus Strategy objectives

Priority	BSIP measure	National Bus Strategy objectives											
		More frequent	Faster and more reliable	Cheaper	More comprehensive	Easier to understand	Easier to use	Better to ride in	Better integrated with other modes and each other	Greener	Accessible and inclusive by design	Innovative	Seen as a safe mode of transport
1	Pomphlett to The Ride bus priority		✓					✓					
2	Bus stop clearways						✓	✓		✓			✓
3	Meavy Way bus priority		✓					✓					
4	Mannamead Road bus priority		✓					✓					
5	Enhanced frequencies	✓	✓		✓	✓							✓
6	Co-ordinated timetable information				✓	✓	✓			✓			
7	Restored, enhanced and expanded park and ride network	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓
8	The George Park and Ride Travel Centre				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
9	Crownhill Road bus priority	✓	✓					✓					
10	Cross-city urban loop service	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			
11	Eastern Corridor junction improvements		✓					✓					
12	Plymouth Embankment		✓					✓					

13	Wolseley Road bus priority		✓					✓					
14	Bus stop improvements					✓	✓	✓	✓				✓
15	Ongoing BSIP resource for delivery and monitoring	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
16	Market research to include researching the demand for night buses and DRT on core corridors				✓		✓		✓		✓		✓
17	Skipper ticket: for multi-operator and multi-modal journeys		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		
18	Permanent route and destination based Personalised Travel Planning			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓
19	Electric minibuses							✓		✓		✓	
20	Longbridge Road bus contraflow		✓					✓					
21	Mutley Plain bus priority		✓					✓					
22	Haye Road bus priority		✓					✓					
23	Community Transport Travel Centre				✓	✓			✓		✓	✓	✓
24	Audio-visual announcement technology					✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	

25	Coypool Park and Ride capacity enhancements		✓		✓		✓		✓		✓		
Measures not requiring additional external funding	Tap and Cap	✓	✓		✓	✓				✓	✓		
	Tap on tap off technology	✓	✓		✓	✓				✓	✓		
	Child fares		✓		✓	✓							
	Fare Cap		✓		✓	✓							
	RTPI Cancellation messages				✓					✓	✓	✓	
	Bus capacity messages				✓		✓			✓			✓
	Cashless payments to reduce boarding times	✓											
	Timing points	✓							✓				
	Service changes				✓	✓							
	Common fare zones				✓	✓							
	Simplified fares structures				✓	✓							
	RTPI QR codes				✓	✓				✓	✓		
	Disruption Messaging Tool				✓	✓							✓
	Customer service training					✓	✓						✓
Days out by bus			✓				✓						

3.4 BSIP Targets

In order to monitor the impact of the measures set out in section 3.3 and assess the effectiveness of the Plan, in accordance with the National Bus Strategy, targets are proposed for.

1. **Journey times**
2. **Reliability**
3. **Passenger growth** and
4. **Customer Satisfaction**

The targets are set out in Table 5.

Targets are proposed for 2034 with interim targets set for 2030. These dates have been chosen because 2030 is the target date for Plymouth becoming carbon neutral, which bus services will have a key role in helping to achieve, and 2034 is the end of this BSIP and the Plymouth Plan.

Performance against the targets will be reported against and published on the Council's [National Bus Strategy](#) webpage every six months.

Table 5: Proposed BSIP targets

	2030	2034
Journey time	Average bus journey times in 2030 on Plymouth's six core corridors will be the same as in 2023	Average bus journey times in 2034 on Plymouth's six core corridors will be quicker than in 2023
	90% of passengers are satisfied with on-bus journey times	95% of passengers are satisfied with on-bus journey times
Reliability	99.4% of scheduled mileage operated	99.6% of scheduled mileage operated
	85% of scheduled bus services are on time ⁶	90% of scheduled bus services are on time
Passenger growth	23,013,275 passenger journeys (2030/31)	26,073,937 passenger journeys (2033/34)
Customer satisfaction	90% overall satisfaction with local bus services	95% overall satisfaction with local bus services

4.0 Financial Implications

The implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan are minimal. However, the consequences of not having a fit for purpose Bus Service Improvement Plan are potentially significant.

⁶ A bus service is deemed to be on time if it is between 1 minute early and 4 minutes late of when it was due to arrive

The development of the BSIP is fully funded from the DfT Bus Capacity Grant which is available to support the development of the Enhanced Partnership and associated Bus Service Improvement Plan.

The delivery of the BSIP places no additional financial demands on the Council. This is because it is an aspirational bidding document to Government. However, delivery of the BSIP is subject to securing additional funding. Failure to produce a high quality BSIP will therefore detrimentally affect Plymouth's ability to secure future Government funding for the improvement of bus services.

The development of the BSIP is resourced by Officers within Strategic Planning and Infrastructure, including a dedicated National Bus Strategy Officer funded by the Bus Capacity Grant. Delivery of the BSIP, in full, will require additional resources, as set out within the Plan. This additional resource would be funded through the BSIP and hence does not represent an additional pressure on the Council.

5.0 Recommendations

It is recommended that the Growth and Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

1. Endorses the draft 2023 Plymouth Bus Service Improvement Plan

Reason: To meet the requirements of the National Bus Strategy and ensure that Plymouth is well placed to receive future rounds of Government funding for bus services.

2. Endorses the nine passenger priorities set out within the Plymouth Bus Service Improvement Plan 2023 as the drivers behind the improvements the BSIP seeks to deliver.

Reason: To provide a clear, evidenced, rationale for the improvement of Plymouth's bus services which meets the needs of current and future bus users.

3. Endorses the measures set out within the Bus Service Improvement Plan as key interventions which support the policies of the Plymouth Plan and, on delivery, will help deliver the identified passenger priorities.

Reason: To meet the specific requirements of the 'National Bus Strategy: Delivering Bus Service Improvement Plans using an Enhanced Partnership' guidance.